Lonnie Hudkins Interview 9/1/74 CONFIDENTIAL HW 9/2/74

Accompanied by wife Mary and son Lon Jr arrived about lunch time and stayed through supper, until dark. (He doesn't drive, Mary dislikes night driving, they'll return.) They live in Belair, where he covers Harford Cty Md York Pa for Balt. News-American.

We taped about 2:45, with gaps where he asked I turn the machine off. These were infrequently places where he did not want me to record sources, more often personal comments, as on the Hobbys(Oveta brains, runs paper; Bill nice person better at his horse-raising, married to daughter Stallings of What Price Glory, etc)

There are some things we discussed by phone that we did not go into or mentioned only briefly.

These is not full. Notes mostly on what might not be taped because we spoke before and after and taped not at all during dinner and afterward or while he was reading those pages of the 1/27/74 transcript and the relevant appended documents I showed him. No time for all.

Of my writing he knows II only. Only disagreement he believes LHO was a shooter.

He was CIA while reporter. Says very common. Says CIA has 100,000 working for it, mostly part-time, inside U.S. Most city rooms have someone from or reporting to CIA. Details his break on tape, reasons. Les Whitten was full-time CIA before reporter or went there from Hearst, forgot which. They remain friends. His work seem to be mostly South America. He mentioned Castro, Jagan assassination plts and involvement with a Haitian who had been shot to which he got clandestine access in hospital and offered asylum.

Knew General Cabell well (administrator, not real spook), Dulles but not well, and others like superspook Noel (retired, living in Mexico and hating Agency).

He knew Dallas and Houston officialdoms well but more personal relationship than one would expect as norm even for south. Close to Decker, more to Sweatt, helped Walthers get job. Gerald Hill reporter -good one- before cop. Many other, including Wde's office natural, Close to Hosty. Sometimes those close carpooled.

The paper LHO had that he lifted for Hosty's protection was the size of a cigarette paper. It had the numbers of Hosty's private car and home phones.

Close to Vince Drain, FBI, who begged him to ease off on case.

Brown and a other agent saw Mrs. Oswald Sr. at Ft. Worth.

One point at which he wanted tape off is when we were discussing Castro assassination. I had said Anderson also had bum steers. But he rambled and we didn't get to what he could have said of this. We rambled much.

Says other assassination plots, believes conspiracy and more than one successul. Different plots rather than different teams. First to have been Atlanta, then Houston. Altanta month earlier. Ruth Paine's car's license (brown wagon) recorded Houston, says.

Wesley Buell Frazier's divorce - I didn't know he'd been married- Marina co-respondent. Papers secret. Confirms Aynesworth's story that he "had the use of Marina" for a month. Prevalent situation.

Castro assassination plot of which he was part scratched when the man who was supposed to do it told him I can do it but I'll get killed and I don't want to get killed.

Jagan plot changed when the word came down that objectives would be accomplished another way. (He apparently knew nothing of the AFL-CIA Lovestone/Romaldi operations.) McCord had already gone to Guyana and established an insurance business as a cover. The deal was long enough for it to make money. Other time he knew McCord was 11/22/74 when he went to Dallas to help HL Hunt leave. Says not to DC, which Paul had told me. Confirms rest Paul's story. Never knew Hunt but believes both capable murder, esp. McCord, whose farright belief is that strong, that sincere. Doubts Hunt was Dulles' ghost on basis Dulles the better writer and books better than Hunt's writing.

Impressions most pressure on Seth Kantor, apparently only over reporting seeing Ruby at hospital. I told him Kantor now chicken but not retracting and he attributed to pressures, glad to know not backing down, believes Kantor told truth.

He and Kantor were flashed in by Fritz for interview, brief, with LHO. His story he asked LHO why he killed JFK and he said he didn't know it happened. Why did he kill Tippit? Who's Tippit? If Kantor not with him then they spoke to LHO as he walked down hall. And it would then have been Goulden.

Can understand how LHO was so cool.

Say he told mother he was into something real deep.

Didn't buy my saying one explanation coolness expectation government would take care of him and his needs.

Tried to remember name ACLU lawyer, didn't, never finished that story.

Fritz from New Mexico with repotation of being great, wild-west shot but vision so poor he had to hold papers almost at eyes to read.

Henry Wade has files other than at office. So does Sweatt, who is keeping them as inheritance for his son. Sweatt was married twice before the wife who killed herself over JFK assassination, twice since.

Paul has some of Lonnie's files. Lonnie has box or boxes. Has been robbed.

Firm belief FBI covered everything up, lied and began bugging all of them immediately.

Lonnie made up the reason given for Ruby's shooting Oswald and fed it to Howard who fed it to Ruby, to save Jackie the agony of a trial.

Knew Judge Joe Brown well. Tape complete on this and Kilgallen, who he says was used by Hoover to leak report LHO not FBI. Brown uneducated. Sarah Hughes asked him to join a law class she was teaching. He said he couldn't qualify because so little education. She said he would but he lasted only couple months before he quit. Man for JP and rose because he was liked. Not bright. Took a joke. Lonnie read.

Brown told him Kilgallen pretty lady, that he slapped her thigh, she his. He had asked others besides Lonnie before seeing her, including Wade. All said she had JFK connection.

Sheridan approach to him through daughter - why that way unexplained - on narcotics only and (as I recall) 1967.

Says FBI never interviewed him on this after Baltimore. Think he said they did see him but on another matter.

Because as soon as they said anything the FBI would be speaking to them, Hudkins, Alexander, Goulden and Sweatt arranged a conference call for which they made up number he wasn't sure of. (Not the six-digit number which he does recall.) They then discussed this by prearrangement by phone. With half-hour little red-headed FBI agent sitting at his desk on pretext trying to pump him on this.

Comment: I had told him that it is I who had Kevin and Manrahan call him when Maworski was appointed special prosecutor. He told me he had started to give right number when he caught himself after giving three digits. My recollection of the report that came back to me is that the reported remembers the first three correctly and made a comment about others. Not necessarily inconsistent but the kind of thing he'd have said if anyone had told him what had been said on my phone.

His source was Houston, not Dallas.

His comment on the official story is why one agency for LHO. Apparently FBI, CIA. Can't understand how CIA was so cool about it.

- When he read Goulden FBI reports, as Mary also did, they both said some not true. (He says Goulden has changed, apparently politically and apparently to liberal.) Neither he nor Goulden would have used the other as an unidentified source on such a story. However, there were other reporters who did make stories up, including direct quotes.

Tapes begin with his account of interviewing Perry Russo in insane asylum Baton Rouge with ypug woman whose name he can't recall. Right after assassination itself. Accurate description Russo. Says they then spoke of Ferrie and LHO, not for first time after Garrison. When I told him I had always had doubts about Russo and knew of the disappearance of WDSU footage and that there was another with LHO besides Steele his reactions was interesting. I mentioned no station name and no people, although I

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had Jesse Coe in mind. He immediately spoke of six-footer, which is what Coe is not but is what he told me of the "third man." We discussed missing evidence, footage, and Hudkins said not to hide other man but spent in film. Don't know basis. Now there were two TV stations that had film, WGN, on N. Rampart, and WDSU, on Royal in Quarter. It does have a unique characteristic. a courtyard. Hudkins spoke of a radio station with a courtyard. It happens that LHO was on a WDSU radio show first, before TV show, if there was TV show. Don't remember.

He and another reporter from his paper went to Baton Rouge, not apparently for that purpose only and then saw Russo, woman. When I asked him could the institution have been above Mt. Jackson, he said yes. He added nothing when I told him of interviewing a man who had said Sunday night after it that he had spent evening with assassins.

Howard was an old friend, before he was Ruby's lawyer.

Hudkins got to see Ruby after arrest. Say he asked him why he did not shoot night lineup. Quotes Ruby as saying what he does not believe, that he didn't want to hit any "old friend." Most reporters knew him. Says he was then standing next to Ruby. He was unclear whether this was Friday or Saturday night. He and other apparently got to speak to LHO first time he was taken to Fritz' office.

Say the man shown in Odum Exhibit 1 (Ex 237) is in the pictures of the Friday night lineup-room "press conference."

One of informants in six-man Dallas CP call now a judge. Confirms Paul R. on all but two being informants but adds one was Wade's and that there was a story in which he figured and Henry asked him not to use because if he did it would blow. Says he didn't and was now a judge and a good one.

Describes himself as Noul protege. Says Noul pulled many CIA murders.

Spoke to Arnold Lewis Oswald afternoon 11/22 and says he gave identically same story he later gave. He could have picked this up from WCII, including details of how was he holding rifle (like parade rest) and not rear window but back from it. Also his statement to wife of all the Secret Service protection. Says Buddy Walthers' wife standing next to the Rowlands.

Knows Percy Foreman well.

Goulden then on News. They joined in covering up some goofs to save people's jobs. One when Sweatt or Decker told them that if they used a story on some Walthers foulup he'd be fired. Not if they didn't.

Note on Wade's files above wrong. FBI took them and never returned them.

Walthers also at theater. It is he who wrestled LHO down. Bruise on LHO's head from theater seat. All account to him use same words, "This is it." He apparently has no concerns about how Hill and Aynesworth could be at some many right places so fast and alone, nobody else duplicating.

Tape has bit I don't recall remarkable mention man whose name he couldn't remember now British consul in NYC. Apparently in Dallas then and knows something. Perhaps British intelligence man earlier? (Stories about how they pulled tricks on French reporter.)

CIA contacts heavy on WxPost. He singled this out.

Knows there were FBI reports on Russo. Apparently new.

Mary appeared uneasy at first but gradually relaxed. Lom Jr. said nothing except when father, mother reading transcript, which he later read. In first Tet offensive. Mary sometimes remembered details, some people Lonnie didn't. They appear also to have been in Denver for a while.

Aynesworth closest to Alexander.

Hudkins so close to Brown Mrs. Brown asked him to keep judge from eating fried potatoes when they lunched together. Dietary reasons, illness known. Brown told Hudkins he knew he was about to die. Describes him, Bobby Jr as fine human beings, not bright.

He told us over phone that daughter 28. Mary told Bil 22. Mary 16 when they married. Lonnie now 49. Hair thin, white.

Describes Mexican with LHO other than as Andrews did in hair. Says he was in loft with LHO, swaying upper floors TSBD. Says others say they saw rifle stick out, fire. Interviewed large black woman who was splashed apparent with JFK's brain but possibly from spray from missed shot. Saw concrete scar at underpass (Tague shot) and says meant low trajectory. (Mark very small to me. I saw curbstone. Have to mean small calibre.)